

GACarver, Jr.
DCI/SAVA

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E RID

(pica)

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1. AT HIS 10 JANUARY SESSION WITH [] SECRETARY LAIRD

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MADE SPECIAL POINT OF VOICING HIS CONCERN OVER PROBLEMS
ENGENDERED FOR HIM BY HIS ALMOST TOTAL LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF
CONCRETE RESULTS OF POST 17 DECEMBER MR II ARC LIGHT STRIKES.
LAIRD STRESSED THAT SO FAR AS HE AWARE HE HAD SPEEDILY APPROVED
EVERY ARC LIGHT MISSION REQUESTED BY VIENTIANE SINCE 17 DECEMBER.
HE ADDED ~~XXX~~ ^{THAT} AGGREGATE WEIGHT OF EFFORT DIRECTED AT NVA
FORCES AND SUPPLIES INVOLVED IN COMMUNISTS CURRENT MR II
OFFENSIVE WAS BOTH MASSIVE AND EXPENSIVE. UNFORTUNATELY,
CLAIMED, HE WAS INCREASINGLY VULNERABLE TO QUESTIONS FROM
CONGRESSIONAL AND OTHER QUARTERS ABOUT WHAT THIS NORTH LAOS ARC
LIGHT EFFORT HAD ACHIEVED. HE PROFESSED HIMSELF PARTICULARLY
CONCERNED OVER QUESTIONS SENATOR SYMINGTON WAS SURE TO RAISE
ON LATTER'S RETURN TO WASHINGTON.

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2. LAIRD ASSERTED THAT SAC HAD HAD NO BDA WORTHY OF THE NAME ON MR II ARC LIGHTS FOR FOUR WEEKS. HE FURTHER ASSERTED THAT EVERY TIME HE TRIED TO GET HARD DATA THROUGH THE MILITARY COMMAND CHAIN HE WAS TOLD THAT THE INFORMATION IN QUESTION WAS KNOWN ONLY TO THE CAS STATION IN VIENTIANE, WHICH PICKED THE TARGET BOXES AGAINST WHICH ARC LIGHT SORTIES WERE MOUNTED.

3. IT IS DEBATABLE HOW MUCH OF THE ABOVE IS FACT AND HOW MUCH IS POLITICS, BUT NONETHELESS WE DO HAVE A REQUEST TO WHICH IT IS POLITICALLY NECESSARY FOR US TO RESPOND. [] HEARD THE SECRETARY OUT, WAS CAREFUL NOT TO AGREE WITH HIS ASSERTIONS, BUT PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND DISCUSS IT FURTHER AT THEIR NEXT SESSION ON 17 JANUARY.

4. WE DO NOT WISH TO OVERBURDEN VIENTIANE [] AND ARE ACUTELY CONSCIOUS OF OTHER URGENT DEMANDS ON YOUR TIME. NONETHELESS, WE NEED CONTINUED ARC LIGHT SUPPORT AND FOR ANY REASONS WANT TO BE AS RESPONSIVE TO SECDEF AS CIRCUMSTANCES.

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PERMIT. IDEALLY, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR ESTIMATE OF BDA AND
ACHIEVEMENTS STRIKE BY STRIKE OR BOX BY BOX SINCE 17 DECEMBER.
IF THIS IMPOSSIBLE, PLEASE CABLE AS SOON AS YOU CONVENIENTLY CAN
THE MOST DETAILED RESPONSE YOU CAN MAKE TO SECDEF'S QUERY. YOU
SHOULD APPRISE AMBASSADOR GODLEY OF THIS REQUEST. LEAVE TO YOUR
GOOD JUDGEMENT HOW BEST TO HANDLE AIR ATTACHE OFFICER AND
7/13 TH.

5. FOR SAIGON [] TO EXTENT THAT YOU CAN DO

25X1

SO WITHOUT MAKING WAVES, WOULD APPRECIATE [] AND

25X1

3 (discreetly) [] ASCERTAINING HOW 7TH AF/MACV AND PACAF/CINCPAC ARE
HANDLING LAOS MR II ARC LIGHT BDA REPORTING.

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END OF MESSAGE

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William E. Nelson
C/FE

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George A. Carver, Jr.
DCI/SAVA

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